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SOVIET COLONIALISM IN THE BALTIC STATES: A NOTE ON THE NATURE OF MODERN COLONIALISM

Although in the United States and especially in Asia and Africa the colonial character of Soviet nationality policy is not yet fully recognized, the nature of Soviet colonialism, thanks to increased research, has been better and better understood. At least three considerable difficulties have hampered this understanding in the past. First, there has been a reluctance to recognize the nationality problem in the Soviet Union altogether. This has been largely caused, as Professor Richard Pipes of Harvard explains, by the American ideology of the "melting pot" and a related attitude that nationalism is evil and therefore not worthy of attention. According to Professor Pipes, Americans failed to understand it because of "a more or less conscious equation of the American and Russian experience with national minorities." Americans assume that in the Soviet Union, as in the United States, "gradual assimilation of the minorities is both progressive and inevitable; progressive because it tends toward the establishment of true equality," Professor Pipes writes, "inevitable because it is backed by superior culture and economic power. How persuasive such considerations can be," Pipes continues, "is best illustrated by the example of an eminent American jurist who was shocked to find upon visiting Soviet Central Asia that native children were attending separate schools instead of Russian ones! Still fresh in memory," Pipes adds, "are comparisons equating the Ukraine with Pennsylvania, and Georgians with the Welsh or Scots." An additional obstacle in understanding Soviet colonialism has been, to quote from the same article by Pipes, "a very pronounced reluctance to concede that the problem is really something important and enduring." This attitude stems, Pipes says, from a value judgment of nationalism. "Men of good will," he explains, "are against nationalism, because nationalism has been responsible for so much bloodshed, hatred and various other forms of irrational behavior. And because men of good will, like men of bad will, so often allow wishes for fears) to interfere with their judgment of facts, they sometimes think that to recognize the reality of something one does not approve is tantamount to approving it; hence they are inclined to deny reality to that of which they disapprove. Thus, though they may concede that the nationality problem exists, they like to think it will disappear." ¹

Two other difficulties in understanding Soviet colonialism, prevalent especially in Asia and Africa but also in the United States, are rooted in the differences that ostensibly distinguish Soviet policy from the old type colonialism, and also in the ideological character of the Soviet system itself. First, in many aspects Soviet colonialism looks different from the classical colonialism, in the bygone era practiced by European powers. Thus, for example, while the "capitalist" colonialists denied to the seized countries social equality, education, and industrialization, the Soviets freely grant and even promote it. They do not publicly suppress the local language, either, and instead of forbidding, require the conquered people's participation in certain governmental rituals. These differences succeed in camouflaging the fact of Moscow's arbitrary rule, especially for people who forget that there is more than one way to skin a cat.

Finally, the colonial nature of Soviet nationality policy is obscured by the ideological nature of Communist policy-making and the ideological character of the Soviet system itself. The Soviets claim that their objective is creation of a Communist society which, once established, is supposed to represent mankind's highest ideals. Its creation requires patience and sacrifices. Should nationalism of a smaller or larger nation be allowed to stand in the way of achieving this ideal? In this

way, Moscow's colonial policies are justified as mere means necessary to make Communism a reality. Such explanation, intentionally or not, hides the fact that Communism is promoted by force from a foreign center of power and that in the Soviet Union the creation of the new system is purposefully and inextricably linked with the domination by the Russian ethnic group over all the others.

Examination of the Baltic experience in political, economic, demographic and cultural development under the Soviet domination helps to clear much confusion that still beclouds the understanding of the colonial character of Soviet nationality policy.

I

Moscow has ruled the Baltic States of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia for an uninterrupted period of twenty years (1944 -64). The very beginnings of this rule and domination, that go back to the fateful period of August, 1939 - June, 1940, betray a traditional, though ideologically refurbished, imperialist aggressiveness of a big state toward small countries. The Baltic states did not join the Soviet Union voluntarily but were annexed by force. On June 15 - 17, 1940, in violation of mutual security pacts that Moscow had forced on the Baltic states just several months before (October, 1939) the Red Army overran the three republics, and within six weeks Moscow formalized the incorporation of the Baltic States into the Soviet Union. This "forcible incorporation," using Secretary John Foster Dulles' expression, was camouflaged by the pseudo-democratic ritual of Soviet-type elections so as to convince the world and provide written "documentation" that the transfer of power to Moscow was legal and voluntary. Since then the Soviets have promoted a myth that they won power as a result of popular revolutions against the Baltic governments led by the local Communist parties. This simply is not true. Communist parties in the Baltic were very small, numbering less than a thousand each; they functioned underground and the extent of their effective infiltration was limited primarily to cultural and literary activities. Their strength in labor unions and elsewhere was much too negligible to allow them to influence, much less to overthrow, native governments. On the other hand, the Baltic states had achieved very respectable levels of economic prosperity and social peace, making such revolutions highly unlikely and certainly unlikely to be successful. In declarations, proclaiming the establishment of Soviet power, the Soviets themselves have admitted that Baltic independence was liquidated with the help of the Red Army.² The most dramatic refutation of Soviet claims that Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia freely liquidated themselves for membership in the Soviet empire is found, of course, in the fact of armed rebellion against the Soviets at the start of the German-Soviet war in June of 1941, and then in the very heroic guerilla war fought against the Soviets after the war, in Lithuania for almost eight years, until the beginning of 1952.³

In fact, then, independent Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia were reduced to the status of constituent republics within the Soviet Union, with certain autonomous powers granted to them by the Soviet constitution. The scope of this autonomy is rather impressive on paper; it includes the right to maintain armed forces, to conduct foreign relations and even to secede from the Union. By the terms of the same constitution, however, this autonomy of decision making is reduced to administration of decisions previously made in Moscow. It is so, first, because while the constitution provides for a federal system of state organization, it reserves the monopoly of power for the Communist party, which has a centralized, unitary organization. The Lithuanian, Latvian, and Estonian parties function as mere subdivisions of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and have to obey every directive issued at the party's center in the Kremlin. Thus, for example, the Estonian Communist party's rule in Estonia merely means an administrative execution of centrally decided policies with which the Estonian leaders themselves possibly disagree. Second, the Soviet constitution provides for central control and planning of economy and finances; this leaves all important budgetary and economic decision making to Moscow. Only the creation of sovnarchoy (republic economic councils) in 1957 returned some effective decision making to the republics. This relative freedom, however, has been much eroded by the establishment of regional economic councils (there is one for the Baltic states and the old East Prussian region) in the early 1960's.

As a result of such arrangements, republic administrators frequently have less freedom to act than a typical county board in the United States. Examples of recent Lithuanian experience illustrate this. In 1957, the Lithuanian party and government leaders were overruled on their plans for the development of locally based hydroelectric power and had to agree to the construction of a thermodynamic power station that depends on natural gas imports from the Ukraine, several hundred miles away. In 1959, these same leaders were forbidden to proceed with their own reform of the educational system. In 1961, they were reprimanded for exercising freedom in such a seemingly small matter as the choice of which historical monuments in Lithuania should be renovated and which not. Again, three years later these leaders lost a fight to keep an eleven-year secondary schooling. Disobedience to Moscow is dangerous, as was clearly demonstrated by the recent Latvian example. In 1959, Latvian party and government leaders pressed for a greater Latvian share in the fruits of Latvia's industrial production and insisted on securing membership for the Latvians in the Latvian Communist party. Moscow, however, disagreed. Latvian leaders were charged with "localism" and, worse, with "bourgeois nationalism," and were thrown out of office. Some of them were deported from Latvia. In no country in Africa would such demands to a colonial ruler be considered unreasonable, but they were in the supposedly anti-colonialist Soviet Union.

This brings us to a third important limitation on the exercise of autonomy in the Baltic republics, namely, the Russianization of the party and government, especially of the party's ruling apparatus. Paradoxical as it may sound, Moscow Communists do not completely trust their non-Russian brethren in important administrative and party positions. This was especially true under the Stalinist regime, when actually for every minister in the Baltic councils of ministers there was a Moscow-appointed Russian, and for every native party secretary there was a Russian one. Under Khrushchev, the principle of such

supervision and control has not changed, only the number of watchdogs has been diminished. Such "liberalization" did not necessarily increase the importance of native Communist leaders. In the case of Latvia, for example, top government and party positions, especially during the 1959-62 shake-up, were filled with Russianized Latvians who had lived in the Soviet Union ever since the October revolution.

Furthermore, the Russians constitute an unproportionally large percentage of Baltic party memberships and, as much as the scanty data permits us to judge, an unproportionally high portion of middle party leadership of the rayon and city levels.⁴ Thus, in mid-year of 1961, only some 44% of Latvian party membership was Latvian, although the percentage of Latvian population in the Republic still was 62%. In Lithuania, the Russians and other non-natives constitute about 38% of party membership though their percentage of population is only 21%, of which only 8.5% is reported as Russian. The Estonians in 1961 constituted only 60% of the Estonian party membership, but 72% of the population. It must be added that the Russianization of this monopolistic power instrument is relentlessly continuing.

II

If it does not take long to discover that politically the three Baltic republics are controlled from Moscow, the colonial character of Moscow's economic policies frequently escapes detection. It is so because to some extent economic policy cannot help but be influenced by purely economic considerations and, furthermore, because Moscow's economic colonialism appears to differ from the traditional pattern.

To be sure, like the party and the Soviets (the government), the economy, too, is managed and administered within a Kremlin made framework and under Russian direction which leaves to the natives a rather narrow span of freedom. It is controlled by a three level organization, the Republic *sovnarchozy* (In Lithuania's case, its economic council also manages most of Kaliningrad's economy), the regional Western (Baltic) economic council that plans and coordinates the economy and promotes its specialization in all three Republics and the Kaliningrad *oblast'* and the national *sovnarchoz* in Moscow, in addition, of course, to the *Gospplan*. The respective jurisdiction of this managerial hierarchy varies; with it fluctuates the length of control of republic economic managers. The Moscow and regional economic leadership are largely in the hands of Russian personnel; Russians play an important role also in the economic councils of republics.

However, despite this central control, the Baltic economy, as previously pointed out, was not developed in the traditional colonial manner. The Soviet ideological policy provided the distinguishing differences. If the doctrine of old colonialism demanded that colonial areas be kept as mere suppliers of cheaply secured raw materials for manufacture in the mother country. Communist ideology required industrialization as well as collectivization so as to create a "Socialist" order and sustain Soviet regime. Thus, the Soviets first nationalized the industries, then collectivized agriculture and finally worked at the industrial expansion. In the Baltic states industries were nationalized in 1940, and collectivization was completed in 1951; it was accompanied by the changes in Republic constitutions (1951 in Latvia and Lithuania, 1953 in Estonia) that eliminated concessions to private economy granted in 1940. Having accomplished collectivization, Moscow declared that Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia had reached the status of a "Socialist" nation. Collectivization, as is generally known, led to the ruin of the rather well developed and internationally competitive Baltic agricultural production, which sank so low that certain crops did not reach prewar production levels even by 1963.⁵ Moscow further damaged agriculture by rejecting the specialization in the very efficient and profitable production of meat and dairy products that was developed in independent times. No indigenous political leader would have attempted to reintroduce the Tsarist grain growing policy, as the Soviets did, and hoped to stay in power. Unconcerned with Baltic welfare, the Soviets did it, only to reverse themselves some two decades later, in 1963, when Khrushchev suddenly complained that he was puzzled why the Baltic states didn't specialize in dairy and meat production like Denmark. The collective farmer had to pay for this and for other types of mismanagement; as a result, he lives in a semi-feudalistic stage of dependence, squalor and deprivation.

For a very long time, the collective farmer also financed the Moscow directed industrial expansion, which, contrary to agriculture, reached very respectable levels of achievement. Industrial expansion started as soon as the republics recovered from the damages inflicted on the industrial plant during the war. It was first begun in Latvia and Estonia, and only in the fifties in Lithuania. According to the sometimes disputed Soviet statistics, since 1940 industrial production in both Latvia and Lithuania has increased twelvefold, and in Estonia thirteenfold.⁶ The index of Baltic industrial expansion most of the time ran considerably ahead of the Soviet average. In 1961, the three republics (with Kaliningrad) mined more than 65% of the entire Soviet oil shale, made 47% of all Soviet automatic telephone stations, built 22% of passenger train cars, 20% of trolley cars, 18% of all electric washing machines, 15% of bicycles and motorcycles, and 9% of paper.⁷ The republics also make farm machinery, IBM machines, TV sets, radios, refrigerators, all sorts of machine tools, cement, fertilizer, etc.

Although impressive, not all of this industrial development has been greeted with unadulterated joy in the Baltic republics themselves. The Balts feared that such concentration of investment in industry would leave agriculture — which still engages 41% of the Latvian and Estonian population and 59% of the Lithuanian — to its own fate. Furthermore, a number of native Communist leaders became apprehensive about Moscow's disregard for native industrial needs. In addition, especially in Latvia because of an alarming situation there, the leaders dreaded the political-sociological effects this industrialization already exerted on the ethnic character of individual republics.

Such fears were well founded. Baltic agriculture, like agriculture everywhere in the Soviet Union, is in difficulty, despite reforms like the recently started guaranteed wage policy in some Estonian kolkhozes. In the industrial development — true to Stalinist tradition and to Moscow's needs — the Soviets preferred the building and expansion of heavy industries. Consumers' industries and food processing for which there was in the Baltic states a continuous and indigenous supply of raw materials were neglected. As a result, the Soviets developed industries which depend on supplies from distant parts of the Soviet Union and which produce goods that only very partially are needed or can be absorbed by local markets. It is also interesting to see that Baltic industries work primarily for the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic. For example, in 1960 Lithuania imported 71% of all raw materials from the non-Russian republics, while more than 51% of all exports — primarily manufactured goods but also processed meat and food went to the Russian republic.⁸ This triangle pattern of exchange is also noticeable in the case of Latvia and somewhat less in Estonia, which possesses large local resources of electric power and industrially usable oil shale and thus does not need the same amount of imports as the others.

The dissatisfaction of the native leaders with this Moscow-oriented industrial expansion has been increased by a number of other disadvantages. The Baltic republics, for example, have very little voice in distributing their industrial production to consumers; this results, as in the case of Lithuanian cement or Latvian refrigerators, in the neglect of republic markets while very large quantities of these products are daily shipped to Soviet Russia and elsewhere. The local leaders have also to find funds to cover these newly installed and domestically unnecessary industries. Furthermore, these leaders object to the high cost of unit production necessary because of the high cost of importing raw materials. Local satisfaction with these new industrial projects has not been increased by the knowledge that the turnover taxes for manufactured TV sets, etc., will be fully collected by the central government in Moscow, which then will decide what percentage of that tax to pour back into the producer's republic, nor by the realization that large segments of their economy, for example, electric energy production in Lithuania, are completely dependent on outside sources. Under a rigid central planning system this dependence creates innumerable economic problems that unfavorably affect productive continuity, cost and quality.

In addition to these results of political and economic dependence, such industrial policy has had an extremely serious sociological consequence, especially in Latvia and Estonia where industrialization has been more extensive. Plainly speaking, it has unfavorably affected the ethnic composition of the Baltic population. Non-Balts, primarily Russians, have been imported to man the expanding industrial plants and organization. In other words, the rising shortage of industrial labor so far has been satisfied with immigrant Russians who immediately become permanent residents. Why should this be the case in countries where forty per cent of the population are engaged in producing food for the remaining sixty? The fact is that because of great agricultural inefficiency, caused by the regime's collectivization policy, a disproportionately large part of the work force is tied to the farm and consequently is not available to satisfy the needs of industry. It also must be noted that in developing new industries, Moscow so far has not taken into consideration this shortage of ethnic labor. This disregard has led to justified charges that such industrial expansion is purposely pursued with the aim of introducing into the Baltic republics strong and increasing colonies of Russians.⁹ Indeed, if the Soviets did not desire to reduce the Baltic majorities to minorities, they could quite easily reorient certain industrial expansion without any economic detriment to the total industrial development of the Soviet Union.

Thus this soviet industrialization has been primarily responsible for tripling the percentage of Russian population in all three republics. In 1959, only 62% of Latvia's population was Latvian, while before the war it was 75.5%. In Estonia, instead of the prewar 88.1%, Estonians constituted only 72%. The number of Russians in Latvia rose from 10.6% in 1935 to 26.6% in 1959. In Estonia, the Russians increased from 8.2% in 1934 to 21.7% in 1959. Only in Lithuania did the percentage of autochthonous population diminished by a mere 1%, from 80% to 79%. The number of Russians there, however, rose from 2.3 to 8.5%. Lithuania, furthermore, is soon expected to share the experience of the other Baltic states, because the continued industrialization is beginning to exhaust available local labor supply and will soon require immigration of larger number of Russians into the republic.

It is quite understandable why sooner or later such development was bound to provoke a reaction which, for example, in Latvia, the most painfully affected republic, bordered on resistance to Moscow's dictates. In 1959, the Latvian vice-premier Eduards Berklavs, an old pre-October Communist, together with several younger Communist functionaries, revolted against Moscow's policies and demanded certain important changes.¹⁰ The rebels demanded that Moscow curtail expansion of those industries in Latvia whose production serves exclusively non-Latvian areas. Furthermore, they demanded priority for industries that do not require extensive imports from other republics. In addition, Berklavs and Kalnberzins, the first secretary of the Communist party and a candidate member of the party's presidium in Moscow, said that they would not release Latvian made refrigerators to other markets until the Latvian market itself was satisfied. These leaders also proposed that heavy industry be deemphasized and light industry, for which Latvia had sufficient labor power, developed instead. These native Communists also requested that Russian officials in Latvia learn Latvian, that priority in admission to party membership be given to Latvians, and that the Latvian school curriculum be revised to allow more hours for study of Latvia's geography, history, language and literature.

On June 10, 1959, Nikita Khrushchev himself came to Riga to inquire into the situation. He brought with him top men of Soviet secret police who started an investigation which resulted in the dismissal and deportation of Berklavs and his closest collaborators, and in the firing of others like first secretary Kalnberzins and chairman of the council of ministers Vilis Lacis, a famous writer who has repeatedly won Stalin and other prizes for literature.

III

In addition to considerable Russianization which further enhanced Russian political, economic, and cultural influence in these states, industrialization has been largely responsible for a very rapid urbanization. Thus, the Latvian urban population increased from 34% in prewar time to 59% in 1959. The Estonian percentage grew from 32% also to 59%. The Lithuanian urban population in 1952 constituted 42%. It represented a growth of almost 20% in 20 years time. At present, Lithuanian cities are growing twice as rapidly as before the war. The new urban population comes primarily from two sources: the Russians and other Slavs immigrating to work in new industries or to assume positions in management, and *kolkhozniki* from local collective farms who succeed in escaping their semifeudalistic bondage. The Russian influx has greatly Russianized the cities or, using a Soviet euphemism, made them "multinational." It is reported, for example, that the cities of Riga and Vilnius are at least 40% Russian. This ethnic composition of the cities bears strong resemblance to the situation under the Tsars. However, it also conforms to the general Soviet pattern.

It must be added that generally the introduction of the Soviet order was costly in human lives and suffering and has stifled the growth of the Baltic populations. Great demographic losses were suffered during the war as a result of mass liquidation of the Baltic Jews, deportations and liquidations by the Germans, exchanges of population, and war casualties. These losses, however, were comparable to any in war time Europe. However, while the other countries by the end of 1940s could recoup their losses from natural birth rate, the Baltic countries continued to lose population because of the terrorist policies of the Soviet regime. The present excuse of the regime that much of this terror represented Stalinist violations of "Socialist norms of legality" cannot change the fact that during the first Soviet occupation, 1940-41, and after the war until Stalin's death, the Baltic countries lost an estimated 700,000 people.¹¹ These were deported, liquidated or allowed to perish in prisons or labor camps. Of these, Estonia lost about 150,000, Latvia over 250,000, and Lithuania about 400,000. The Lithuanian losses were so bad that in 1959 the country's population was still under the level of 1940.¹² Although deportations and mass liquidations have ceased, the Baltic states continue to be drained of their population, though now in a slow and less obvious manner. Thus, for example, the republics lose many graduate specialists because they have to serve elsewhere as a payment for scholarships they have received. Another category of young people is annually lost to all sorts of Communist construction projects in distant parts of the Soviet Union or as pioneers in the Virgin lands. These people allegedly volunteer; some indeed are attracted by promises of good pay, but the majority are simply conscripted. Many do not come back. Additional losses result from service in the armed forces.

The Russianization of the Baltics and the continued drainage of the native population present the greatest obstacle and challenge to the national survival of Lithuania, Estonia, and Latvia. This danger is magnified by the natural population pressure, as the Latvian and Estonian, and even the Lithuanian birth rate is much smaller than the Russian. It also should be added that territorially the Russians already have "outflanked" the Baltic States by colonizing the Kaliningrad area with Russians and by administering it as a part of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic. It is entirely possible that the committee, constituted in 1961 for the drafting of a new Soviet constitution, may recommend a transfer of this area to the Lithuanian Republic because the Kaliningrad economy is already run by the Lithuanian *sovnorkhoz*. This would add to Lithuania some 600,000 Russians who inhabit the former East Prussian area now. Furthermore, if in the drafting of their constitution the Soviets follow the general lines of their present economic organization — according to Marxism - Leninism, politics is supposed to be determined by economics — all three Baltic states, together with the Kaliningrad oblast may be organized into a federated republic. Such possibility exists, at least judging from the recently promoted economic, cultural and other cooperation between the Baltic parties and governments. Creation of a Soviet Baltic federation would enormously increase the strength of the Russian element.

IV

Soviet cultural-ideological policies in the Baltic republics betray still another characteristic of Moscow's behavior which obscures that policy's colonialist nature to those who, para-phrasing Professor Pipes, equate the Soviet and American experience with national minorities and thus regard their disappearance in the Soviet Union as progressive. Soviet behavior exhibits characteristics of nation building that is not of European colonialism in Asia or Africa. We know that important decisions for the Baltic states are made in Moscow; these decisions are executed by native Communists who are not trusted completely, however, but work under the control and supervision of specially assigned "elder [Russian] brothers." This indicates that the Soviets do not regard ideology as a sufficiently strong instrument of control. In addition to using native Communists, Moscow imports Russians and, furthermore, endeavors to assimilate the Baltics themselves.

Thus, if under the ideological surface Soviet political, economic and demographic policies strongly resemble the old type imperialist colonialism, their cultural policies are engineered to produce the proverbial "melting pot" of nations. Moscow has not yet succeeded in breaking down all the barriers necessary for its creation, but if there previously were any doubts about such Soviet intentions, they were resolved by the new Party program of 1961 which declares that now the time has come not only for the assimilation of cultural contents but also of cultural forms; in this process the medium of the Russian language is regarded indispensable.¹³

What is the purpose of this assimilation? First, it is the creation of "an international culture common to all the Soviet nations" and, second, the production of the "Soviet man," conditioned to live in the coming Communist system. If previously the required characteristics of this culture and this man were largely Communistic, now they are Russian-centered as well. The Baltic people realize this. In 1963, for example, students of the Pedagogical Institute at Vilnius,

capital of Lithuania, publicly denounced the party's new program as the Communist party's plan for the Russianization of Lithuania.¹⁴ On October 9-12 of the same year, at Frunze a conference of experts began the study of methods for this assimilation; its deliberations suggest that the regime is aware of the fears of its intended victims.¹⁵

The basic characteristics of this "international" culture and the new Soviet man are familiar; now they are articulated in more detail than previously, especially for the consumption of the youth. In a nutshell, the "international" culture is supposed to represent the "progressive" traditions of such people and further the "revolutionary traditions of the builders of communism." In plain language, this means that the new culture is to consist of only those national traditions that are useful to Moscow and that the Russian revolutionary tradition is to be the standard guide for further cultural development. The new Soviet man also is to be an "internationalist." This euphemism hides the concept of a person who has completely transferred loyalties from his ethnic community and culture to the larger Soviet (meaning Russian) community and tradition. Ideologically, this Soviet man, of course, is expected to subscribe to Communist views; he is to be an aggressively atheistic, collectivistic materialist. Culturally, he is supposed to be bilingual Russophile who has adopted Russian as his second mother tongue and who favors an "eternal union" with Russia. Politically, this man is to regard Russians as "elder brothers" and accept Russian leadership. He is, furthermore, expected to subscribe to the principle of "friendship among peoples" which Soviet writers explain by the example of "friendship and fraternity" in the "multinational" Red Army.¹⁶ This analogy underscores the ideal of Soviet nationalities disciplined in a common organization under a common language to serve their Russian superiors and leaders.

Efforts at this sociological transformation have been especially intensified since 1957, that is, since the now deposed Khrushchev, by completely taking over the party-government leadership, contained the post-Stalinist liberalization and stabilized the regime's control. The special target since that time has been the Baltic youth.

There seem to be two phases of this Soviet process of remaking the Baltic youth into "Soviet men."¹⁷ First, the regime attempts to estrange them from their native history, traditions, and second, to instill into them the characteristics of the "new man." During the continuously sustained phase of estrangement, the regime fights against appearances of "bourgeois nationalism," which is reported to consist, for example, of "localism," that is, giving preference to Republic's economic needs, of demonstrations of "nationalist isolationism and peculiarities," of "bourgeois nationalist" interpretations of history and literature and generally of refusal to accept the view that classes, not nations, move history. Manifestations of nationalism also include the prevalent distrust of the Russians, refusal to speak Russian in public, dislike for the Russian language and Russian immigrants. "Bourgeois nationalist" supporters at home and abroad are denounced for encouraging Baltic nationalism. They are identified, largely, as leaders of independent Baltic states, guerrillas who fought the regime after the war, clergymen and active church members; abroad they include post-war Baltic refugees, the United States and the Vatican, the latter especially in the case of Catholic Lithuania. Campaigns of vilification and even hatred are conducted through all media of communications and in schools, against "bourgeois nationalists," the United State, and religion.

A word must be separately said about the Soviet suppression of religion. The Communists, of course, persecute the churches as their main ideological competitor which they can not tolerate. In the Baltic republics they have closed down many churches, deported the clergy, curtailed or forbidden religious services, made church attendance grounds for dismissal from jobs, choked off the training of new priests and ministers. However, in addition to purely ideological Communistic grounds, they have political reasons for persecuting the churches. The Catholic and the Lutheran churches are the oldest national institutions, the only ones that preserve the historical continuity of the Lithuanian, Latvian or Estonian culture and traditions. They are identified with native nationalism and therefore are an enemy. The Soviet suppression of religion, may be added, stands in sharp contrast to the tolerant attitude toward local religion displayed by the West European colonial powers.

The second phase of Soviet social engineering deals with the positive inculcation of the youth with desirable "Soviet" characteristics and with their integration into the Russian world. All of this begins at school where from the kindergarten children are taught the virtues of Russia. Teaching of Russian begins with the second grade and the number of hours given to its study in the junior and senior years in high school is greater than the equivalent for the native languages. Since 1959, subjects of republic history and geography are no longer offered separately but is a smaller part of the general courses on Soviet history and geography. In Latvia and Estonia, a system of teaching Baltic and Russian children under the same roof though in different classrooms has been introduced. According to Soviet data, in the early 1960s, 250 such schools functioned in Latvia.¹⁸ In Estonia this has been begun in 24 secondary schools,¹⁹ and as yet there is no record of such schools in Lithuania. In other words, in Latvia and Estonia, bilingualism has already been extended to schools. Mixing with the Russians is further promoted through tourism, sports, student exchanges. Young adults are encouraged to join the so-called "multinational" construction projects and to form ethnically mixed families. The youth also have been pressured to join the pioneers and the Komsomols. Although the percentage of young Communists in the Baltic republics, like the percentage of party members is still smaller than the Soviet average, in Lithuania, for example, their number has reached a figure of over 209,000 which represents a hundred per cent increase in the last ten years. The Komsomol serves not only as an instrument for ideological indoctrination but also for the integration of the youth into the Russian culture and community. Ideologically, in the late fifties and early sixties, the regime has been relying for indoctrination on a systematically and continuously conducted campaign of atheism which has been developed into a propaganda system of its own.

The colossal Soviet investment of time and money and the engagement of the entire institutional machinery available to a totalitarian government in this effort of changing the national identity of the Baltics shows better than any official pronouncements that the regime takes this endeavor very seriously and proceeds with the production of the Russified new Soviet man in a planned and systematic manner. This Soviet undertaking is an experiment in social engineering unequalled in its boldness and design by any modern imperialist moves, be it the Germanization policies of the Kaiser's empire or the Russification by the Tsars. Conducted under laboratory-like conditions of physical and cultural isolation, this effort is expected to complete the Russification that could not be accomplished by physical colonization of the Baltic area. Ironically enough, however, it is exactly in this endeavor that the Soviet achievement has been the smallest. Although inroads have been made, somewhat more so in Latvia and Estonia than in Lithuania, the Soviets have not succeeded in Russifying the Baltic communities, and nationalism in the Baltic republics is reported to be very strong. This means that the Soviets are far from creating a melting pot situation that would easily facilitate assimilation. The greatest danger to the ethnic Baltic identity remains the physical colonization resulting from the more or less imperially motivated economic policies. Under present circumstances, the Baltics still can resist cultural Russian imperialism and it is reasonable to expect them to continue this resistance for a prolonged period of time. It would be fatally impaired, however, if Moscow succeeded in reducing the Lithuanians, Latvians and Estonians to minorities in their own lands.

V

Professor Seton Watson suggests that the Soviet treatment of nations ruled by Moscow within the Soviet borders be labelled imperialistic instead of colonial.²⁰ The use of the word really is not important. "Colonial" is simply more contemporary and comparative; thus it is more functional and therefore preferable. It is essential, however, to note, that both signify exercise of power by a foreigner in the interests of the foreigner. The Baltic experience furnishes ample evidence to show that Soviet nationality policy is such. According to an apt appraisal by sociologist Professor Alex Inkeles, no amount of Soviet achievement can obscure "the basic fact" that "this policy has constituted a forceful imposition of social, political, and economic forms by a powerful center upon a host of colonial subjects."²¹ Soviet colonialism certainly is different from the traditionally European. Together with their undesirable totalitarian system, the Soviets promote institutions and improvements — for example, industries and education — that the old type colonialists were slow to grant but that are desired by any progressive nation and envied by the newly developing countries of Asia or Africa. However, the Soviet Union furthers these material improvements of civilization without regard to the welfare of nations it rules, without respect of their wishes and will. Indeed Moscow expects through this process to destroy the very identities of nations it claims to be improving.

NOTES

- 1 Richard Pipes, "The Forces of Nationalism," *Problems of Communism*, Vol. XIII, No. 1 (Jan. - Feb., 1964), p. 2ff.
- 2 Akademiia Nauk SSSR. Institut prava im. A.Ia. Vishinskogo. *Istoriia sovetskoi konstitutsii*. Sbornik dokumentov (Moscow, 1957), p. 389ff.
- 3 The Lithuanian partisan movement has been analyzed by V. Stanley Vardys, "The Partisan Movement in Postwar Lithuania," *Slavic Review*, Vol. XXII, No. 3 (Sept. 1963), pp. 499-522.
- 4 Data on the composition of ethnic party membership in the Baltic Communist parties is computed on the basis of official Soviet statistics that reveal the ethnic composition of delegates to republic party conventions. Delegate distribution according to nationality, together with other data, is usually announced by the mandate commissions of these conferences.
- 5 See, for example, some figures on Latvian agriculture in Janis Labsvirs, "The Effect of Collectivization on Latvian Agriculture," *Slavic Review*, Vol. XXII, No. 1 (March, 1963), pp. 121-125.
- 6 V. Sitchikhin, deputy chairman of the Western economic region of the Soviet Union, "Tiesne ob edinit' usilii respublik Pribaltiki," *Kommunist Sovetskoi Latvii*, No. 4 (April, 1963), p. 37.
- 7 *ibid.*
- 8 Walter C. Banaitis, "Die Industrialisierung Sowjetlitauens," *Acta Baltica*, II, 1962, p. 228.
- 9 Hellmuth Weiss, "Die baltischen Staaten," in Ernst Birke und Rudolf Neumann, *Die Sowjetisierung Ost-Mitteleuropas* (Frankfurt-Berlin: Alfred Metzner, 1959), p. 62.
- 10 See the story in Alfreds Berzinš, *The Unpunished Crime* (New York: Robert Speller and Sons, 1963), p. 255ff; also Victor Zorza's comments in *Manchester Guardian*, Dec. 3, 1959, p. 5.
- 11 For somewhat different although substantially similar figures see Weiss, *op cit.*, p. 30, and Andrius Namsons, "Die nationale Zusammensetzung der Einwohnerschaft der baltischen Staaten," *Acta Baltica*, I, 1960-1961, pp. 59-74.
- 12 See I. Iu. Pisarev, *Narodonaselenie SSSR* (Moscow: Sotsek-giz, 1962), pp. 112-114. Pisarev, of course, blames all the losses on the German occupation.
- 13 *Programme of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1961), esp. pp. 102-105.
- 14 *Komjaunimo Tiesa*, newspaper of the Lithuanian Komsomol, July 16, 1963, p. 2.
- 15 *Komunistas*, theoretical journal of the Lithuanian Communist party, No. 11 (Nov., 1962), pp. 30-33.
- 16 *Komunistas*, No. 8 (August, 1962), p. 26.
- 17 See for greater detail V. Stanley Vardys, "Recent Soviet Policy Toward Lithuanian Nationalism," *Journal of Central European Affairs*, Vol. XXIII, No. 3 (Oct., 1963), pp. 313-332.
- 18 Latvian minister of education V. Samsons, cited by Andrius Namsons, "Die Sowjetisierung des Schul - und

Bildungswesens in Lettland von 1940-1960," *Acta Baltica*, I, 1960-1961, p. 155.

19 V. Vialias, "O robote Tallinskoi partiinoi organizatsii po ukreplenu druihby narodov," *Kommunist Estonii*, No. 3 (March, 1964), p 21.

20 *Problems of Communism*, Vol. XII, No. 1 (Jan - Feb., 1964), p. 16ff.

21 "Soviet Nationality Policy in Perspective," *Problems of Communism*, Vol. IX, No. 3 (May-June), 1960, p. 34.